



NCDOT Aims to Help Motorists Save Time, Money During the Holidays



NCDOT will limit construction activities along major routes this holiday season to save travelers time and money.

As families travel over the river and through the woods for holiday celebrations, the N.C. Department of Transportation will suspend most road construction activities on major routes across the state to help make their trips a little smoother. By avoiding traffic delays, motorists can reach their destinations safely and efficiently, while cutting down on fuel consumption and costs. The list of closures will be available closer to the holidays on the Department's [website](#).

Here are some additional tips for safely navigating the highways during the holiday travel season:

Leave early to get a head start on your drive. Travel at non-peak hours when possible;

- Stay alert. Even if construction work is suspended, you may encounter narrowed lanes and traffic shifts in work zones;
- Be patient and obey the posted speed limit;

Stay Connected



N.C. Transportation Now

On the latest N.C. Transportation now, the department shares safety tips for drone use, DMV offices across the state get upgrades for next generation driver licenses, and NCDOT wants to hear what your favorite trails are around the state.

[Watch this episode of N.C. Transportation Now.](#)



NCDOT Employees

- Use alternate routes, when possible, to avoid traffic congestion;
- Stay informed. Real-time travel information is available online and over the phone by dialing 511;
- Don't drive drowsy. Travel at times when you are normally awake, and take frequent breaks; and
- Avoid distracted driving. When drivers stop focusing on the road ahead, they react more slowly to traffic conditions and are more likely to be involved in an accident.

For real-time travel information at any time, visit the [Travel section](#) of the NCDOT website or follow NCDOT on [Twitter](#).

Stoney Creek Bridge in Rocky Mount Opens to Traffic



At a ribbon-cutting ceremony Friday, Nov. 13, in Rocky Mount, Transportation Secretary Nick Tennyson and Board of Transportation Member Gus Tulloss joined City of Rocky Mount Mayor David W. Combs and other local leaders to officially open the bridge on Country Club Road over Stoney Creek. Photos from Friday's ceremony can be found on NCDOT's [Flickr Page](#).

"This is an incredibly exciting day for the City of Rocky Mount," said Tulloss. "Country Club Road is a heavily used route in this community. Having this bridge open is like Christmas coming early for the drivers of Rocky Mount."

Country Club Road south of Hunter Hill Road was closed in February so crews could replace the two-lane, 40-year-old bridge over Stoney Creek. The bridge was classified as functionally obsolete, meaning that it was designed to standards no longer in use.

Because of its condition, NCDOT posted a weight limit

Support Family of Late Grey Bailey

On November 24, NCDOT leadership and staff from Division Four presented a check to Millie Bailey, wife of the late William "Grey" Bailey. The money given to Millie and her family, in the amount of more than \$13,000, was raised and donated from NCDOT staff around the state.

On March 23, Grey Bailey was working in a work zone near the west end of the U.S. 70 Goldsboro Bypass project in Wayne County when he was hit and killed by an impaired driver.

Since his passing, NCDOT employees in Division Four, as well as the local community, have rallied together [to support Millie and their twin daughters](#).

Earlier this fall, employees in NCDOT's Division Eight [held a golf tournament in Siler City](#), with all proceeds being donated to Grey's family. Soon after, department employees from across the state participated in the annual Chief Engineer's Golf Tournament, where all proceeds were also donated to the Baileys. Together, these two tournaments raised \$13,368.89.

NCDOT Board of Transportation Member Gus Tulloss, Chief Engineer Mike Holder, Division Four

restricting single-axle vehicles weighing more than 39 tons and trucks weighing more than 42 tons from using the bridge. The new, four-lane-wide bridge meets current design standards and does not have posted weight limits.

Following the ceremony, crews removed barricades, allowing traffic on Country Club Road to now travel from Hunter Hill Road south to U.S. 64 Business/Buck Leonard Blvd.

This bridge replacement is part of a larger project to widen Country Club Road in Rocky Mount from U.S. 64 Business/Buck Leonard Boulevard to Jeffreys Road.

"We worked with local contractors and were happy to be able to include the community in the construction of this bridge," said Tennyson. "We appreciate the hard work of everyone involved with this project."

[Learn more.](#)

Local Transportation Projects Accelerated and Added with New State Budget

At their meeting this month in Raleigh, the N.C. Board of Transportation was presented with an updated list of new and rescheduled projects for their review. These changes, called amendments, were made possible thanks to Governor Pat McCrory's recently signed 2015 budget and will be voted on for approval in January as part of the 2016-2025 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) - the N.C. Department of Transportation's 10-year construction plan.

The state budget included additional funding for transportation through the elimination of the transfer from the Highway Fund to the General Fund and through other fee and rate changes resulting in an additional \$1.6 billion over the next 10 years for transportation construction.

For NCDOT's Division Four, these include 18 new and accelerated highway projects, three new aviation projects and one new sidewalk project.

"The reforms I signed into law will get these roads built sooner," Governor McCrory said. "The primary purpose of the reforms was to ensure transportation funds were being spent on transportation projects and not diverted to other state programs."

The following are a sample of projects that will be added or

Engineer Tim Little, Division Four Construction Engineer Wendi Johnson and Resident Engineer Brandon Herring presented the check to Millie Bailey at North Johnston High School, where Millie serves as the school resource officer.

Bailey worked for NCDOT as an engineering technician and had been with the department since 2010. He was also a well-respected firefighter for the Bethany fire department in North Carolina.



NCDOT News

Want to learn more about what's going on at the N.C. Department of Transportation? Visit the department's [website](#) or head to NCDOT's [Newsroom](#) for the latest updates.

moved up in Division Four pending approval in January:

- Construct interchange on U.S. 117 at Country Club Road in Wayne County. Construction accelerated from FY 21 to FY 17;
- Make intersection improvements on Wilson Mills Road in Johnston County at Wilson Mills Elementary School. Construction accelerated from FY 20 to FY 18; and
- Widen and make improvements to U.S. 117 between the U.S. 70 Bypass and Fedelon Trail in Goldsboro. Construction accelerated from FY 20 to FY 18.

The complete expanded and accelerated list of [highway](#) and [non-highway](#) projects for Division Four can be found on NCDOT's website.

"Moving the schedule up on projects and adding necessary transportation improvements will help to greatly improve how we get around this growing region," said Board of Transportation Member Gus Tulloss. "I'm thankful to Governor McCrory and our state's General Assembly for recognizing the need for these improvements, and for taking the steps to make the funding available to provide safe and modern transportation in our state."

The department followed the Strategic Transportation Investments (STI) law to identify new projects (either segments or entire projects) at the statewide, regional and division levels. The projects were identified from those previously scored based on the same weights and criteria (data) used to develop the 2016-2025 STIP.

NCDOT Offers Tips for Drone Safety



This holiday season, one of the most popular gifts could literally fly off the shelves.

Whether they're called quadcopters, radio controlled planes, or any of the high-tech brand names, drones are expected to be big sellers this year, with some estimating as many as 700,000 will make their way into Americans' homes by the end of December.

All of these devices fall under the category of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS). UAS technology is an exciting and evolving field, which can lead to confusion for both UAS owners and the general public. NCDOT is offering tips to help UAS owners enjoy their new technology while protecting citizens' safety and privacy.

"We're proud of North Carolina's legacy of being first in manned flight," said NCDOT Secretary Nick Tennyson. "The academic and industry researchers in our state will make us a leader in unmanned flight as well."

NCDOT's Division of Aviation has established guidelines for UAS operation in North Carolina. Both the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the NCDOT Division of Aviation classify UAS flight operations by three categories:

- Recreational - Any UAS flight that is conducted solely for the purpose of recreation.
- Government - Any UAS flight conducted by a government entity to support their work.
- Commercial - Any UAS flight that serves a business purpose or provides a business benefit, even if that benefit is indirect.

Government and commercial UAS operators must adhere to state and federal requirements established by the North Carolina General Assembly and the FAA. Each classification is subject to specific regulations and guidelines.

Many of the UAS owners who receive a drone during this holiday season will use them for purely recreational purposes. While recreational UAS flights are not heavily regulated, the

FAA and model aircraft enthusiast groups have established a number of guidelines which should be followed to ensure a fun and safe experience:

- Always fly below an altitude of 400 feet and fly within your direct line of sight.
- Do not fly within 5 miles of an airport, near stadiums or other public events, or for compensation.
- Do not fly UAS that weigh more than 55 pounds.
- Do not fly at night, even if your UAS is equipped with lights.

"UAS technology is fun and exciting, but it needs to be used responsibly," said Division of Aviation Director Bobby Walston. "These guidelines will help ensure the safety of people in the air and on the ground."

UAS operators, whether recreational, government or commercial, should keep in mind that North Carolina has laws governing drone use. UAS users are subject to all North Carolina laws, even if UAS technology is not specifically mentioned. Current and potential drone owners can find more information about state and federal UAS regulations on the Division of Aviation's [website](#).

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